Review of Tehri Dam Project

*317. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have agreed to review the Tehri Dam Project;

(b) if so, whether names of the members of the Review Committee have been finalised;

(c) whether Government would include the names suggested by Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna only or would appoint neutral persons or agencies;

(d) why when the Committee is likely to give its report; and

(e) who is going to bear the cost of price escalation and losses due to delay in implementation of the project?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF POWER (DR. S. VENUGOPALACHARI): (a) to (e) Government has agreed to provide all facilities to a group of experts suggested by Shri Sunderlal Bahuguna to examine relevant scientific and technical reports and other information relating to the safety of the Tehri Dam. These experts have since been requested to examine the relevant reports and make available their recommendations in three months time for careful consideration by Government for ensuring that all necessary steps are taken to ensure the safety of the dam.

Government has also shown its willingness to have the ecological aspects and resettlement of displaced persons examined by another group of experts which would, inter-alia, include representatives of the Government of India, State Government of Uttar Pradesh, Tehri Hydro Development Cooperation (THDC) and persons nominated by Shri Bahuguna.

The construction activities at the Project site are continuing uninterruptedly and the coffer dam has been raised to a height of EL 660 meters.

Funds for drinking water in rural areas of Andhra Pradesh

*318. SHRI V. HANUMANTHA RAO: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether huge funds have been given to Andhra Pradesh in 1995-96 and the current year to provide drinking water to rural areas;

(b) whether it is a fact that the Central Government holds frequent meetings with concerned State Government officials to carefully monitor their work and progress;

(c) if so, when was the last such meeting held with the concerned Chief Engineer, Rural Water Supply of Andhra Pradesh; and

(d) whether it is a fact that no answers are given to representations from some of the villages by the implementing authority of Andhra Pradesh Government?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI K. YERRAN NAIDU): (a) Central assistance of Rs. 11742.845 lakh in 1995-96 and Rs. 2206.0 lakh in 1996-97 so far has been released to the State Government of Andhra Pradesh for providing drinking water in rural areas.

(b) No, Sir. The meetings are held with the State Government officials as an when considered necessary to review the progress of the programme.

(c) The last meeting was held on 16th February, 1996 with the Chief Engineer of all the States including the Chief Engineer of Andhra Pradesh to review the progress of implementation of rural water supply programme.

(d) As it is a matter within the purview of the State Government, no information is available with the Central Government in this regard.